

VICAR'S NOTES

I write this from Ireland where we are spending the first part of our holidays at a houseparty on the East coast. The leader is the Reverend O. Keith de Berry, Rector of St. Aldate's, Oxford (incidentally he told us that he knows our part of the world fairly well, as he is the brother of Mrs. Hunt of the Mall School). He is here with two of his curates and 40 past and present members of his congregation — some of them graduates and students from the university, others residents of the city. Mr. de Berry and his church (and the Pastorate centred upon it) have greatly influenced many young people, including several from the parish, who have gone to Oxford in the last 13 years, and he keeps in touch with a large number of them still.

Another large and extremely lively group here for only a week consisted of 22 members from a Baptist Youth Club in Hertfordshire. Their leader, only a little older than his members, was obviously doing a very fine job with this irrepressible bunch.

Amongst other interesting people we have met is a man in his late fifties, now living in the Diocese of Worcester, who for nearly 30 years has served on the P.C.C.'s of different churches, for a number of them as churchwarden. He has now left the Church of England and is in the process of learning to become a Quaker, because his experiences on church councils have led him to believe that Anglicanism — at parish level at least — is all too often bogged down in trivialities and endless discussion that leads nowhere. He thinks that church councils should give a spiritual lead, but that they fail to do this because the laity have never been trained to discharge the responsibilities given to them by the Enabling Act of over 40 years ago which established our present set-up. He has also found again and again that, instead of seeking the will of God and making this first and foremost, members of church groups just argue one human opinion against another, and so things go from bad to worse. When we told him of the Quaker principles and procedure we were rather fumblingly trying to follow here, he was most impressed and said that if he had met anything like this in the church councils of which he had been a member, or felt that there was any hope of its becoming general in the Church, he would not have taken the step he has.

This desire and search for God's will, this concern that we should be doing what He wants us to do and not just what we consider best, is something that we need steadily to deepen in Hampton Hill. Those of us who go to Stoke Poges in January will be going expressly with this intention in our minds: to find out, by prayer, study and discussion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, what God's plan for us is, and what are the first steps He wants us to take in the fulfilment of it — both as a Christian community in a rapidly changing district, and as Christian individuals scattered far and wide for many hours of the week by our daily work and secular responsibilities.

But of course we cannot simply remain passive until January. There are urgent claims and calls being made upon us all the time. One such will come from the large number of newcomers who will shortly be pouring into our midst as the new houses and flats now being built reach completion. Somehow we must try to visit them all in a spirit of welcome and service, not just to try to get them to "come to church" — a step for which they are often not ready and would not be helped by. I have, on various occasions in the past, talked to people

who came fresh and unprepared to unfamiliar forms of anglican worship: some of them were baffled and perplexed to the point of irritation, if not repulsion. But I must also say that, most encouragingly, I have recently met others (and they will, I am sure, not object to my mentioning it) upon whom the effect has been quite different. Though there was much they could not understand, they were attracted, not repelled, by what went on. Some of those I have in mind came to our Parish Communion just to hear the banns of a member of their family read, but they found that the service made such an impression upon them through the beauty of its music and the spirit of worship that pervaded it, that they continued to come after the third reading, just for the sake of the service itself and what it had come to mean to them. The friendliness of members of the congregation in inviting them to the breakfast afterwards and making them feel thoroughly welcome and at home has also been fully appreciated, and now they are asking for fuller instruction about the meaning of the service and other matters with a view to Confirmation.

In some churches happenings like this are of frequent occurrence and the name Parish Communion becomes fully justified because of them. We pray that they may become a normal part of the pattern here too, as the Holy Spirit leads us on, and our life of prayer and worship and seeking the will of God strengthens and deepens.

We look forward to a most interesting Autumn and Winter, as we enter upon the second phase of Stewardship, and as MRI gathers momentum throughout the whole diocese, and we become more fully involved in it. Then just before Christmas there will be the Confirmation here, and, just after, the Parish Renewal week-end at Stoke Poges. With regard to the latter there may well be more on a later page, with regard to the former I should like to have more names for the adult group which I hope will begin to meet towards the end of September — a short preliminary meeting for those interested will be held after Evensong on September 10.

THE VICAR'S "AT HOME"

Sunday, July 25, was unfortunately a very wet one but this did not deter a goodly company from coming to the At Home. We left the pleasantly decorated church, lovely with its new altar frontal and tasteful floral decoration, and ran between the drops of rain to Wayside to meet Mr. & Mrs. Brunt. People young and not so young, newcomers as well as "regulars" chatted happily over coffee and mouth-watering "eats"! The occasion was a happy prelude to the departure of many families for their summer holidays. D.M.

THE CHURCHYARD

It is proposed to carry out a further clearance in the churchyard on Saturday, September 11, and all volunteers to help will be very welcome. It is hoped that light refreshments will be supplied as before (these are an inducement in themselves — Ed.).

Will you all bring along what garden tools that you can, such as rakes, shears, etc., but please be sure that they are labelled with the owner's name to avoid any loss or confusion.

This may be the last appeal we shall make to you before the Winter — so please come and help — this really is a case of "Many hands make lighter work." D.L.

YOUNG WIVES' GROUP

On September 29 the new season commences with a service in church followed by an "At home" at Wayside and we hope everyone can keep the date free.

When reorganising for the Autumn will members please remember the Jumble Sale on October 16, for this is when we raise the bulk of our funds!
K.B.

THE BOOKSTALL

We should rejoice that this century has seen the growth of the paperback. It means that much good literature is available to a great many more people. In the last five years this has applied even more so to religious literature. By the time this magazine appears we hope to have started our first real bookstall. The books will be the full price, as in the shops, but many people who are unable to get to a Christian Bookshop will have an opportunity of looking at them and, we hope, buying them.

Each book will have the title, author and price on a piece of paper clipped inside the book. When making a purchase please put this ticket together with the money in the box provided so that we shall always have a record of what has been sold. This is especially important if the bookstall is unmanned as it no doubt will be on occasions.

We have purposely not included any Bible Atlases, Commentaries, Dictionaries, Concordances or Prayer Books at this stage as these are all expensive items and will only sell slowly. If anyone wants any of these items we can easily order them and we have various catalogues which can be consulted. The members of the Bookstall Committee are Mr. & Mrs. Taylor and Mr. Seymour Harris, any of whom will be very pleased to answer your questions, and suggestions for further titles will be welcomed.

In last month's issue of "The Spire" Mr. Brunt mentioned a book by Horton Davies "Christian Deviations" so I thought this and another book by Gilbert W. Kirby "Protestant Churches in Britain" would be good subjects for our first book review, an item we hope to have included from time to time.
H.T.

AUTUMN FAYRE

Saturday, September 18, may well be a day that will make local history. For the first time a fete will be held at Laurel Dene solely on behalf of Laurel Dene.

St. James's along with other local churches and organisations have been arranging, under the guidance of the Matron of Laurel Dene, a fete which will provide entertainment for the residents and an open day for the local people. There will be no charge for admission and any money raised will be used to provide amenities for the residents of Laurel Dene. The Mayor of Richmond-upon-Thames will open the Fayre at 2.45 p.m.

There will be stalls, fourteen in all we hope, offering cakes, preserves, sweets, stationery and many other things for sale; side shows to provide amusements. Entertainment will be provided by two local dancing groups and a band will play throughout the afternoon. Tea will be available, also soft drinks, ice cream and "hot dogs."

St. James's has undertaken to organise and manage a Cake Stall and a Bottle Stall; various side shows and a Treasure Hunt and, of

course, give general help as required.

We hope for fine weather and your support in order to make the 18th a day of real pleasure.

G.I.R.

THE MOTHERS' UNION

The first meeting of the new session will be held in Church, at 2.30 p.m., on the second Wednesday, which is September 8. Following this there will be a Bring and Buy Sale and Tea in the Vicarage Garden. Let us hope that the weather will be fine enough to allow us to take advantage of Mrs. Brunt's invitation, but if the weather is unsuitable we shall go to Wayside.

All our invalids seem to be making a little progress at the moment. Please make a special effort to come to the opening service.

I.V.R.

STRICTLY FOR MEN ONLY

Elsewhere in this issue you will have read of the forthcoming Autumn Fayre at Laurel Dene, and the share which St. James's will be taking in running it. What you will not know is that, on the P.C.C. first hearing which stalls had fallen to our lot, certain male members thereof (who shall be nameless) volunteered the service of "the men of the parish" to run the Bottle Stall.

This was not in fact as rash as may at first appear, because the chances are that your wives and/or daughters and/or sisters, etc., will insist on your taking them (even if you didn't **want** to go), and once there you might as well be doing something, mightn't you?

But that's the easy bit. The other part is to see that we have a few thousand or so bottles to put on the stall, and the object of this item is to let you know that we're looking to you to provide them. For those who haven't had the benefits of a public house education, it might be worth mentioning that the contents of the bottle needn't be drinkable or expensive (the two are usually synonymous); I am informed that such things as salad cream, sauce, ink, bleach, shampoo, etc., are also available in bottles, and will be very acceptable.

To simplify collection, and so that we'll have some idea of the size of the job of eventual disposal, we are holding a Coffee Party at Wayside from 8 p.m., on Thursday, September 9, the price of admission being a bottle or bottles, when all contributions will be "cratefully" received. (Sorry!).

P.S. — To those ladies who couldn't resist the headline and have got this far: the ladies of the Social Committee, who have offered to do the donkey work of brewing the coffee, etc., will be very pleased to welcome at the party all those ladies who would like to provide cakes, or help, for the Cake Stall, and to arrange for any necessary transport.

J.G.

HISTORY SOCIETY

A long and interesting letter has been received from Mrs. Nancie Burns (sister of Mrs. Lois Rooney so well known to many of us) who, as well as expressing her congratulations on "The Birth and Growth

of Hampton Hill" has very kindly sent us a copy of her own book "Family Tree"—an adventure in genealogy. This is a fascinating primer for anyone who would like to trace their ancestors but do not know how to set about it. The author's amusing account of her own successful hunt for rural forebears, during which she traces back eleven generations, makes enthralling reading and is available to anyone who would like to borrow it.

BURLINGTON HOUSE

Mrs. Burns was the Miss Hanson who was Head Mistress of the Girls' school which inhabited Burlington House before it was taken over by The Lady Eleanor Holles' School. The building has been a school for much, if not all, of its existence and has always been of some importance in Hampton Hill. Mr. Arthur Elsee, M.A., Cantab., who opened his Boys' school in 1900 made a daring educational experiment in providing a training for boys not suitable to take advantage of the usual Public School syllabus. He aimed at boys who wanted to become Engineers or Architects and to go into "Works or Offices or to one of the technical colleges" and provide them with a good elementary knowledge of work which they would encounter there. His prospectus, carefully hoarded by Miss Hanson for forty years and very kindly sent to us for our records, might well be issued today as embodying the latest ideas in tackling the unusual or backward boy. Mr. Elsee charged Public School fees and his school was of high standing. The prospectus contains many illustrations of the building itself, its metal and wood workshops, chemical laboratory, tennis lawn and also of Bushey Park and the contemporary riverside. As yet we do not know what caused Mr. Elsee to give up the school for he died as late as 1936 in Devonshire, but during the 1914-18 war the building was used as an officers' billet. In 1920 a Miss Mary Newman took over the school under the name of St. Mary's College and built up numbers to about 30 boarders and 70 day girls. Miss Newman, who is buried in St. James's Churchyard, was a charming and well loved woman whose kind heart probably ran away with her prudence, for she charged pupils what they could afford to pay—about £15 - £25 per term for boarders and £4 - £5 for day girls. When Miss Hanson acquired the school in 1928 the property was considerably dilapidated and she was faced with repairs and decorations on a large scale. Her prospectus tells us that the school owned a dance hall and stage, a Library and Froebel preparatory department with a Kindergarten for children from the age of four. A private bus was run by the school for pupils coming from Twickenham and Teddington. Fees were 23 to 25 guineas per term for boarders and from 3 to 7 guineas for day pupils, exclusive of sundry extras such as pianoforte lessons, dancing, riding and elocution. The prospectus shows a large assembly hall, tennis courts, netball ground and really charming dormitories and dining hall, and a drawing room of dignity and distinction. The 1930 slump together with the calling in of a mortgage by Mr. Elsee's heirs and the appearance of The Lady Eleanor Holles' School on the local scene led to the final defeat of Miss Hanson's school and the field was left open for The Lady Eleanor Holles' foundation to acquire the property which they have owned ever since.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- N.B.—Sunday Services and meetings as usual from August 29.
- Sept. 8.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Service. Followed by Bring and Buy Sale and tea in Vicarage garden (if wet at Wayside).
- „ 9.—8 p.m. Coffee party in support of Bottle Stall for Laurel Dene Fete (W).
- „ 12.—Sunday Schools re-open. 9.45 a.m. Infants (W); 11 a.m. Junior and Senior (Church); 2.30 p.m. Rectory (School). (See also later note Adult Confirmation group).
- „ 14.—10 a.m. Editorial Board (52 Park Road); 8 p.m. Liturgical Committee (Vestry).
- „ 16.—8 p.m. Stewardship — Briefing Meeting (69, Great Peter Street, S.W.1).
- „ 17.—7.30 p.m. Youth Club re-opens (School); 8.30 p.m. Junior Confirmation Class resumes (Vestry).
- „ 18.—2.45 p.m. Fete at Laurel Dene to raise funds to supply extra comforts for the old people.
- „ 21.—St. Matthew: Holy Communion at 9 a.m.; 8 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
- „ 27.—8 p.m. Hampton Council of Churches: Prayer and discussion group resumes its monthly meetings—venue to be announced
- „ 28.—8 p.m. Stewardship Committee: Visit of Diocesan Director (106, Park Road).
N.B.—Reading auditions postponed to a date in October to be announced.
- „ 29.—St. Michael and All Angels: Holy Communion at 7.15 a.m.; 7.45 p.m. Young Wives' Group: Service in church followed by "At Home" at Wayside.
- Oct. 7.—7.15 p.m. Harvest Festival Evensong; 8.30 p.m. Harvest Supper and Entertainment (Hall).

ADULT CONFIRMATION GROUP

Intending members are asked to attend Evensong on Sunday, September 12, and stay behind for a short meeting afterwards, mainly to arrange times and dates.

BAPTISMS

- July 24.—Rosemary Anne Rogers, 104, Uxbridge Road.
„ 25.—Julia Anne Pryke, 21, King Street, Mildenhall.

MARRIAGES

- July 24.—Keith Chaplin to Helen Clare Bartlett.
„ 31.—Maurice Emilio Alfred Zollo to Hilary Sybil Nash.

CREMATION

- Aug. 5.—Florence Georgina Parks, 60, Uxbridge Road, aged 76 years (at S.W. Middlesex Crematorium).